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SUBJECT: RUSSIAN MFA ON AMIS RE-HATTING

REF: STATE 43008

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Kirk Augustine for reasons
1.4 (b, d).

11. (C) On March 21 Poloff delivered reftel demarche on re-hatting the African Union (AU) Mission in Sudan to MFA Department of International Organizations Counselor Oleg Kravchenko. Kravchenko agreed that there was no ambiguity in the AU March 10 statement and that its intention was clearly to transfer responsibility for peacekeeping in Darfur to the UN. He was less certain about what action the UNSC should now take, saying Moscow preferred to wait until the Secretariat delivered its report next week. Kravchenko also

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said that there needed to be more clarity on what the Abuja peace talks would achieve before knowing what the composition of a UN peacekeeping force would look like.

12. (C) Kravchenko indicated that Moscow would support UNSC discussions on contingency planning based on several possible outcomes of the peace talks, but could only envision a "normal UN peacekeeping operation" if the Abuja talks were fully successful. The success of the peace talks was critical, Kravchenko said, because the Sudanese remained opposed to "foreign troops" in place of the AU mission; the Russian Embassy in Khartoum was reporting that "radical forces" had become more active in whipping up opposition to them. Poloff reiterated USG interest in quick UNSC action.
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